

**CITY OF GAHANNA  
PARKS & RECREATION BOARD  
MINUTES –March 2, 2011**

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**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Cynthia Franzmann called the meeting of the Parks & Recreation Board to order on Wednesday, March 2, 2011 at 7:05 pm at Gahanna City Hall.

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:**

Cynthia Franzmann  
Luke Messinger  
Eric Miller – arrived 7:15p  
Laurel Naegele – arrived 7:10p  
Jan Ross  
Vincent Tremante

**Absent:**

Jill Schuler

In attendance from the City were Tony Collins, Director and Alan Little, Parks Superintendent, Department of Parks & Recreation.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Messinger made a **MOTION** to approve the February 2, 2011 regular meeting minutes; seconded by Tremante. **On roll call vote:** Messinger, Yes, Ross, Yes, Tremante, Yes, and Franzmann, Yes. **The motion carried 4-0**

**ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

Remove – Senior Center Advisory Board - appointment

**HEARING OF VISITORS**

None

**OLD BUSINESS**

**110 Mill Street**

Collins explained that staff will be taking forward to Council the request to purchase the property. There are several options for the property;

- First option - to maintain the current contract – which is a lease purchase option; \$340,000 with the seller repairing the roof and painting the exterior of the building; closing in June;
- Second option - pay \$305,000 the current appraised value of the property; building as is; closing as soon as possible;
- Third option – walk away from the contract;
- Fourth option – continue leasing;
- Fifth option – split the payment in half; keeps the price high and continue renting until the final payment is made.

Collins is recommending the second option to Council based on the economical impact the Ohio Herb Education Center has in the downtown, Gahanna Ohio the historical nature of the property and value of the house. Staff believes it is a priority for the city to own the house and continue the Herb Center operations downtown. Collins will be sharing with Council the year end numbers from the Herb Center. Over 2,000 people attended the Herb Center in 2010; while we

lost \$30,000 on operations; there was over \$90,000 economic impact to the downtown area. There were 27 tour buses last year. All indications are that the center will exceed those numbers in 2011. The city is not permitted by O.R.C. to offer below appraised value to purchase a property.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Year End Report – Parks Division**

Alan Little, Parks Superintendent, presented the 2010 Parks Division year in review and the challenges for 2011. The parks division is made up of function and hybrid zoned based management. Despite the reduction in staff the Arbor/Horticulture crew has pruned 873 trees, removed 173 trees and planted 4 trees. The street tree pruning program has been reduced to a once every 12 year program unless there is an issue. The goose control dog, “Shep”, is run every day at various parks and the golf course.

Staff has worked with volunteer groups - four Boy Scouts with their Eagle Scout Award, three Girl Scouts with their Gold Award, over 300 student volunteers from Gahanna Middle School East and Columbus Academy worked on park clean up. The Realtor Association donated \$1,000 and planted the landscaping at the Gahanna Swimming Pool. Igel Construction Company planted over 3,800 plants at Hannah Park.

Little shared some of the challenges ahead in 2011 due to the restructuring of the parks and facilities division and the reduction of staff and budget. The Arbor crew will inventory the Ash trees on city property and look at how the Emerald Ash Borer has affected those trees. Staff will continue working on invasive species removal.

### **181 Granville Road**

Collins stated that Council passed an ordinance to fund CIC \$750,000 to complete the purchase of 181 Granville. The city has entered into an agreement with CIC that will eventually give the city an easement on the property. There are no plans to knock the building down and put in a road in the near future. The long term vision is the building will be an economic initiative provider. Blue Mile, the company that maintains the fiber in the city will relocate its offices to the site in order to have better access to the fiber.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

None

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Collins shared the Director's Report from February 2011; at the last Council meeting Angel Mumma, Finance Director, presented the 2010 year end financial report. Last year was a good year for the city; switching over to RITA was a big component as well as good prudent operations. RITA identified 2,500 non-tax payers from the past five years. The City finished ahead of revenues from 2009. The City staff and administration was able to return about \$3,000,000 to the general fund in recognized savings and cuts; of which \$900,000 was in staffing. Over \$100,000 was from the Parks & Recreation Department alone. The City finished with a \$300,000 net for 2010 and with a \$10,500,000 carry-over.

Collins stated that two big initiatives that will be big contributors to the 2011 ending numbers are the early retirement program and self-insurance of workers compensation program. There are six employees who took advantage of the early retirement program. The savings will be over \$250,000 per year for the next five years. The city will become self insured for the workers compensation program. The city will not have to pay the extreme premiums levied on the city by the Bureau of Workers' Compensation. It is projected to save over \$1,000,000 over the next five years.

The results are back from the 2010 citizen phone survey. There are some good things in it about Parks & Recreation. Parks maintenance is rated higher now than in 2008 and is rated as the highest level of satisfaction of city services. Recreation rating increased as well.

Based on the citizen survey results regarding the tax questions and the economic position of the City, the Mayor announced that she will not recommend moving forward on a proposed tax increase in November.

Collins stated staff currently has received sponsorship commitments of \$7,500 from several businesses for various programs and events.

Collins shared a draft of the City of Gahanna Core Services document with the Board.

Collins shared that Huntington Bank has filed foreclosure papers on the private side of Creekside Plaza. A receiver will be appointed by the courts. The City has met with the bank on items that concern the city.

Collins stated the Big Walnut bridge work should begin once the weather breaks. It is anticipated that by the summer sections one and two and section seven of the trail will be completed. Section three and eight are before council with a request to go forward with a grant application. Section three funding will be in 2011, section eight funding is for 2014.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Aquatics Advisory Committee**

Franzmann stated the plans for the pool are very exciting this year regarding new programs. The prices are lower this year.

### **BAC**

Naegele stated the next committee meeting is Monday, March 28, 2011. Collins stated the bike route signs are currently being installed. After the sign routes are installed there will be 27 miles of connectivity in the community. Tricia Kovacs submitted the application for a Bicycle Friendly Community. Ed Snell has been working on adopt-a-foot program for the route and obtaining the first corporate sponsorship.

### **NRAC**

Tremante stated that at Gahanna Woods there is a skunk cabbage plant that is currently coming up. Tremante stated that every year he makes maple syrup and is interested in working with the Historical Society and the Recreation Department on a program for this year.

## **MEMBERS COMMENTS**

### **Parks & Recreation Foundation**

Ross stated that the Foundation would like to get residents and businesses together to create an Arts Committee. The Foundation would like to get art pieces at Creekside. The committee is still seeking donations and sponsorships for the Freedom Festival.

Collins stated the Foundation will host a "Friday after Five" fundraising event on September 9, 2011 at Creekside lagoon. The cost will be \$25 per person or \$40 per couple. The committee is seeking food donations. There will be silent auctions and live auctions. The goal is to raise \$15,000.

### **Veterans Memorial Committee**

Nothing at this time

**School Board Report**

Ross stated that the Gahanna Jefferson Education Foundation rose over \$122,000 at their annual fundraising event. Over 400 people attended.

**Citizen Financial Advisory Committee**

Ross stated that the Mayor met with the committee to share the results of the survey. The group discussed the additional items that were recommended from the committee.

**Charter Review Committee**

Miller attended the meeting. The committee has some questions how the Parks & Recreation Board is run. There were no recommendations from Parks & Recreation staff or board.

Tremante would like to have Christy Evans, from the Gahanna Historical Society, make a presentation about the Big Walnut Country Club. Tremante would like to see a historical marker about the County Club placed at Friendship Park.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business to come before the Parks & Recreation Board at this time, Messinger made a **MOTION** to adjourn.

The Parks & Recreation Board meeting adjourned at 9:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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Pam Crossmock, Administrative Assistant

Approved this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2011

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Cynthia Franzmann, Chair